

HONORING JOHN MEHRMANN OF
MANCHESTER, NH

HON. JEB BRADLEY

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 15, 2003

Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Manchester's John Mehrmann, New Hampshire's winner of the VFW's Voice of Democracy Scholarship contest. This contest is held each year to give high school students the opportunity to voice their opinion on their responsibility to our country. The following is Mr. Mehrmann's essay:

We were just kids. All our lives, everything was perfect; everything worked. Everything was planned. We went to school. We came home. We slept. We went to school. We came home. We slept. And somewhere along the road of our lives, we would graduate from school. After graduating from school, we would go to a new school, we would come home, and we would sleep. There was nothing to fear; there would always be food in the fridge and gas in the car. Every time we flicked the light switch, there would be light.

Then something happened. Suddenly something, somehow, someday, somewhere—shattered. As the dust settled and the magnitude of what we'd lost became clear, it wasn't the death of an age for us, and it wasn't the death of jokes. But as we walked across the street or through the halls or drove our cars, something was different. The world was smaller that day, and all the faces—you with your expensive car, or you who always had something important to say—they all looked so much alike. They didn't all have the same hair color or number of freckles. Some had straight teeth and some had big chins. But they were all sad. All thinking.

Innocence died that day—the innocence that let us worry about our grades, or the pimples on our noses. The freedom to do what we wanted, when we wanted, was lost somewhere in a hundred stories of broken steel and dust. We didn't grow up when we got our driver's licenses, and we didn't grow up when we got our first jobs or even when we turned 18. We all grew up when we had to.

We heard a lot of talk after our abrupt maturation about freedom and responsibility. There were a lot of speeches, and everyone seemed very serious. But mostly, we knew. We knew we could never be kids again. We finally realized what it meant to be responsible. Being responsible was doing our best, even when no one was watching. The responsibility thrust on us some unexpectedly one late summer morning opened our eyes. We learned to think with our minds and feel with our hearts. Now the people we heard speaking French or Swahili when we came to school each day weren't foreign—they were victims of reality like the rest of us.

We never knew how or when we would grow up. We didn't know why we had to. Then we saw the photos and the film clips of men and women leaping from flames only to careen hundreds of feet to their deaths. Again and again, we saw the missiles which we had all thought so harmless piloted to murder what could have been our entire school in an instant.

Freedom wasn't a badge. Freedom isn't a badge. It isn't a prize trophy to be flaunted and waved in the faces of the enslaved. Freedom is a burden, but a burden worth its prices. Responsibility is the price of freedom. Freedom does not unequivocally allow for self-indulgence. Self-indulgence and selfish-

ness are not responsible, and it is irresponsible to self-perpetuate at anyone's expense. We think identities to be so important, and we imagine our lives to be so worthy of greatness that we forget the community of mankind of which we are so preciously miniscule a part.

Obsequiousness and submission are not the stigmas they were before adolescence was made extinct. Freedom is not a right to individuality, but a right to community. It is a right of individuals to determine their sociality within the bounds of a world not limited to oceans or lines drawn on a map, but one which spans the entirety of a globe, encompassing a myriad of peoples with enumerable concerns. It is the responsibility of the world's free people to determine which concerns take precedence. The free peoples of the world must recognize the greater goods for which to strive. Absolute singularity is no longer an option.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF TRAVEL AND TOURISM

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 15, 2003

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, this week our Nation will celebrate the 20th Anniversary of America's leading industry—the industry you all use—but never consider as an industry. It's called the Travel and Tourism Industry.

The Travel and Tourism Industry is present in every Congressional district in the US. It's our restaurants, our museums, rental car companies, hotels, sports arenas, ski shops, and beaches.

Travel and Tourism brings in over \$1.5 billion to the economy of my district alone. There are 18 million Americans employed directly or indirectly by the tourism industry, and it is one of the few industries that creates a multi-billion dollar trade surplus.

As Co-chair of the Congressional Travel and Tourism Caucus, I've worked with my colleague MARK FOLEY of Florida to educate this body on the importance of tourism to this Nation's economy and to our districts' local economies.

The Travel and Tourism Industry has suffered many setbacks over the last two years including 9/11, the War in Iraq, SARS, and our struggling economy. All this hurt an industry which requires people to have confidence. So I encourage all Americans to take this opportunity to get out there. Take a trip, go to dinner, or visit a park or museum. Enjoy this great country of ours and share it with others.

Let's honor the 20th Anniversary of National Travel and Tourism Week.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 15, 2003

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor those police officers who devotedly and selflessly work to protect and serve the public on a daily basis. I also pay special tribute to those men and women who have given their lives in the line of duty.

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation data, 152 law enforcement officers lost their lives while protecting our communities across America in 2002. Of those 72 died by criminal acts, including 54 officers shot, two stabbed, four fatally injured in assaults, and 12 who were killed when somebody drove a vehicle into them. The other officers died as a result of accidents.

During this week of poignant ceremonies, New Mexico remembers three police officers from our State who died last year. We honor Officer Jeffrey Cole Russell of the Albuquerque Police Department, Police Officer Kevin William Schultz of the Pojoaque Pueblo Tribal Police Department, and Deputy Sheriff Damacio Montano of the Valencia County Sheriff's Department. We will never forget these men who made the ultimate sacrifice.

All Americans should keep alive the memory of these three brave and heroic men, and recognize the contributions of the countless other law enforcement officers who have either been slain or disabled while performing their duties. For these reasons I am a proud member of the Congressional Law Enforcement Caucus. Throughout my public career, I have done everything that I can to provide for law enforcement. Whether it is fighting for the COPS program or working to see the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program be reauthorized, I am eternally grateful for the service of our men and women in blue.

Sadly, in our society today, unless we are personally affected by violence or disorder, we often do not realize the dedication of our law enforcement officers, and the sacrifices they make to keep our communities safe. "National Police Week" is an important time for all Americans to recognize the role law enforcement officers play in safeguarding the rights and freedoms we all enjoy daily and give thanks for their countless hours of service.

Mr. Speaker, we owe a debt of gratitude not only to the slain officers who served their communities so courageously by preserving law and order, but also to their families, who have lost a spouse, parent or child. Our law enforcement officers are heroes and we must never forget their contributions and sacrifices—during "National Police Week," they are well remembered.

RECOGNIZING COMMUNITY HOUSING WORKS OF ESCONDIDO, CA

HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 15, 2003

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Community Housing Works (CHWorks) of Escondido, CA for receiving the Fannie Mae Foundation's annual Maxwell Award of Excellence on May 13, 2003.

Community Housing Works was created by the 2002 merger of Community Housing of North County and the San Diego Neighborhood Housing Services to provide housing, re-investment and community leadership opportunities throughout the San Diego region. CHWorks was one of eight organizations hand-picked to be an inaugural member of the San Diego Foundation's Organizational Effectiveness capacity building program.